

Casini, A., Godin I., Clays E. & Kittel F. Lack of recognition in the workplace is associated with poor mental health. Oral presentation at the 2011 meeting of the Belgian Association for Psychological Sciences, May 2011, Ghent University, Ghent (Belgium).

This study investigated the relationship between recognition in the workplace and workers' mental health. Building on the theory of recognition developed by Honneth (1995) it is hypothesized that a lack of recognition on the part of organization, supervisors, and colleagues is associated with workers' high level of anxiety and chronic fatigue. Four types of recognition were considered as a function of the spheres of relations with others in which they are generated: (1) the social esteem stemming from social relations; (2) the respect of worker's rights, stemming from moral/legal relations; (3) the emotional support from colleagues and (4) from supervisors stemming from interpersonal affective relations. The database results from the merger of data from two large Belgian studies – Belstress III and Somstress – and comprises 4013 participants (2304 women), aged 21-66, and working in 9 organizations. Selected items from Siegrist's ERI scale, Karasek's JDC-S scale, and Quine's mobbing scale were used for measuring the 4 types of recognition. Results show that the perception of lack of social esteem, respect of workers' rights and emotional support from colleagues and from supervisors are associated with high levels of anxiety (all O.R. above 2.15,  $p < .001$ ) and chronic fatigue (all O.R. above 1.72,  $p < .001$ ) even after adjusting for original databases, sex, age, and company. Moreover, these tendencies remain unvaried as a function of workers' occupational grade. These results confirm that denying social esteem, respect of worker's rights and emotional support can be harmful for workers' mental health.